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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/709,772	05/27/2004	Andre' W. Olivier	2234.0	3771
9748	7590	11/04/2005	EXAMINER	
LAITRAM, L.L.C. LEGAL DEPARTMENT 220 LAITRAM LANE HARAHAN, LA 70123			LOBO, IAN J	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3662	

DATE MAILED: 11/04/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/709,772	Applicant(s) OLIVIER, ANDRE' W.	
	Examiner Ian J. Lobo	Art Unit 3662	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 October 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-69 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-17 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 18-69 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>8/27/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election of claims 18-69 in the reply filed on October 13, 2005 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 24-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 24-27 include the limitation "the first shaft" and "the second shaft".

However, there is no antecedent language in claim 22 for such limitations. It would appear that claims 24-27 should depend upon claim 23 and not claim 22.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 18-69 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over any one of the patents to Olivier et al ('286) or Williams, Jr. ('011) when taken in view of Owsley et al ('027).

The patents to Olivier et al and Williams, Jr. each discloses a conventional underwater cable steering device that includes a connector attachable around the periphery of an underwater cable and rotatable about the cable, and a control device. The control device includes a body, first wing disposed at one side of the body and arranged to pivot about a first axis, and a second wing disposed on the opposite second side of the body arranged to pivot about a second axis. It is further noted that the first axis and second axis do not intersect the cable and are largely horizontally disposed. Finally, both Williams, Jr. and Olivier et al, disclose that the control devices provide depth control or vertical displacement for the towed cables.

The difference between the Olivier et al and Williams, Jr. devices and independent claims 18, 36 and 51 is the claims include "ballast means to help ballast the steering device to maintain the first axis and the second axis largely vertically disposed". Such ballast means in conjunction with the vertically disposed wings provides lateral displacement for the towed underwater cable.

Owsley et al discloses a device that provides both lateral and vertical displacement for a towed underwater cable. Of special interest with respect to the instant application and claims is the use of wings (18) or vanes that are

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ballasted (see elements 26a and 26b) along an axis largely vertically disposed so as to provide lateral displacement for the towed cable.

In view of Owsley et al, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify either Williams, Jr. or Olivier et al to include vertically disposed wings on the control body, with the concomitant ballast means, so as to provide the cables of Williams, Jr. and Olivier et al with the capability of both vertical displacement and lateral displacement. Claims 18, 36 and 51 are so rejected.

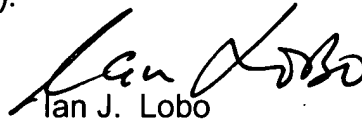
Dependent claims 19-35, 37-50 and 52-69 are further provided by the combinations of the above noted prior art.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ian J. Lobo whose telephone number is (571) 272-6974. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 6:30 - 3:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas H. Tarcza can be reached on (571) 272-6979. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Ian J. Lobo
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3662

ijl